

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

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1. An obstetrical vacuum extractor for placement on a child's head for use during childbirth, the obstetrical vacuum extractor comprising, in combination,

a vacuum cup formed of a first material, the vacuum cup having side wall defining a hollow interior cavity, the side wall having a side wall edge forming a cup opening, the vacuum cup further including a vacuum opening communicating with the interior cavity of the vacuum cup and being adapted for connection to a vacuum source;

a lip formed of a polymeric second material, the second material being flexible relative to the first material, the lip being secured along said side wall edge adjacent the cup opening; and

a handle coupled to the vacuum cup.

2. The obstetrical vacuum extractor of claim 1 wherein the vacuum cup is substantially in the shape of a bell, and the side wall includes a generally outwardly flaring edge, the lip being molded to the outwardly flaring edge.

3. The obstetrical vacuum extractor of claim 1 wherein the lip extends on the order of 0.20 to 0.40 inches beyond the side wall edge.

4. The obstetrical vacuum extractor of claim 1 wherein the lip is molded along a portion of the side wall.

5. The obstetrical vacuum extractor of claim 1 wherein the cup is substantially transparent such that it does not occlude vision through to the interior cavity of the cup.

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6. The obstetrical vacuum extractor of claim 1 wherein the lip is postmolded to the vacuum cup.

7. The obstetrical vacuum extractor of claim 1 wherein the second material is an elastomeric material.

8. The obstetrical vacuum extractor of claim 1 further comprising means for enhancing adhesion of the lip to the vacuum cup.

9. The obstetrical vacuum extractor of claim 1 wherein the side wall further comprises at least one opening extending therethrough, said opening being disposed substantially adjacent the side wall edge, the second material of the lip being molded into the opening to mechanically couple the lip to the vacuum cup.

10. The obstetrical vacuum extractor of claim 9 comprising at least two openings, the openings being circumferentially disposed around the side wall.

11. The obstetrical vacuum extractor of claim 1 wherein the side wall further comprises at least one rib, the second material of the lip being molded to the at least one rib.

12. The obstetrical vacuum extractor of claim 11 wherein the side wall includes an outer substantially circumferential surface, and the at least one rib extends about at least a portion of the circumferential surface.

13. The obstetrical vacuum extractor of claim 11 comprising at least two ribs.

14. The obstetrical vacuum extractor of claim 1 further comprising an adhesive applied to a portion of the side wall substantially adjacent the side wall edge

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such the second material of the lip is molded along the adhesive.

15. The obstetrical vacuum extractor of claim ¹~~1~~ wherein the side wall further comprises at least one projection extending outwardly from the side wall, the lip being molded along the at least one projection.

16. An obstetrical vacuum extractor comprising:
a vacuum cup substantially in the shape of a bell with an outwardly flaring edge and a cup opening;
a post-molded lip on the outwardly flaring edge of the vacuum cup;

a hollow, elongated stem integrally formed with the cup and communicating with the cup opening, the distal end of the stem being adapted for connection to a vacuum source; and

a gripping device coupled to the stem.

17. A method of making an obstetrical vacuum extractor for use during childbirth comprising the steps of:

molding a hollow vacuum cup of a first material, the cup having a cup opening;

molding a lip of a polymeric second material along the cup opening, the second material being flexible relative to the first material.

¹²~~18~~. The method of claim ¹²~~17~~ wherein the step of molding a hollow vacuum cup of a first material includes the step of molding a substantially transparent cup wall.

¹⁴~~19~~. The method of claim ¹²~~17~~ wherein the second material is an elastomeric material.

¹⁵~~20~~. The method of claim ¹²~~17~~ wherein the first material is a polyethylene.

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